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659 or guardians forward a written statement to the school that
872 they do not wish their children to participate.

'The programme and text-books for teaching religion are prepared by church organs and submitted to the Ministry of Education. The text-books for all grades of elementary schools were prepared by a special commission attached to the Metropolitan Curia of Cracow.

'Children who attend religious classes participate in the following religious practices:—(a) On Sundays, holidays, and the beginning and end of the school year, they attend church services; (b) They participate in "recollections"; (c) A prayer is recited at the beginning and end of each school day.'

'A network of Catholic theological seminaries which prepare for priesthood and missionary work is spread throughout Poland.'

659 Another issue of *Polish Facts and Figures*, dated August
873 6th, 1949, gives the following facts about religion in Poland: 'Catholic clergymen enjoy many personal privileges which have long ago been abolished or restricted in other countries . . .

'Ecclesiastical seminaries have nearly 18,000 students. Three hundred children's homes, 15,000 pupils, 600 kindergartens with 22,000 children and 40 secondary schools with 9,000 students are under monastic management. The Catholic school system is crowned by the Lublin Catholic University.

659 'Poland is one of those few countries where religious teaching
793 exists in schools. The 6,300 priests teaching religion are paid by the State.

'The number of religious orders has grown during the existence of the People's Poland. While in 1939 there were 1,742 monasteries and convents in Poland, there are now 2,010. The number of nuns has grown from 17,000 to nearly 19,000. Despite the housing shortage, nuns enjoy such privileges as enable them to live in comfortable, big houses.

'Poland holds first place in Europe for the number of Catholic periodicals. Their circulation amounts to 6,387,000.

' . . . 62 Catholic journals were published in Poland as compared with 20 such journals in France.'

659 In all the Army and police units of Poland there are official chaplains.

To demonstrate the devotion of the Communists to Catholicism, General Karol Swierczewski, commander of the

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871 Austrian Galicia they underwent a great cultural revival in
563 the latter part of the nineteenth century, and this was the only area in which schools and universities using the Polish language could develop freely. The Polish population in Prussia lived under better educational conditions than did their co-nationals in Russia, but in both countries they were subjected to vigorous programs of denationalization.

871 The state of popular education in Eastern Europe is re-
212 vealed by illiteracy figures for the years 1920-21, before the new independent states had exerted an influence on education. The rate of illiteracy for males and females of school age and over was 7 per cent for Czechoslovakia, 15 per cent for Hungary, and between 30 and 40 per cent for Poland and Yugoslavia. The rate was between 40 and 50 per cent for Rumania and Bulgaria, and in Albania it was much higher. These figures may be compared with illiteracy rates of under 1 per cent for Great Britain and Germany, 6 per cent for the United States, and about 50 per cent for Russia.

• [873] It is worth noting that the low level of literacy in most of Eastern Europe did not prevent the development of a high level of culture among educated persons. The universities of Prague, Cracow, and Budapest were the most distinguished among many of high level, and very significant contributions to European culture in the arts and sciences came from this region. The "intelligentsia," as those with higher education and professional skills were referred to, provided both the leadership of the national movements and the statesmen of the nations born at the end of the First World War. As individuals they were the equals of the political leaders of the great powers and included in their number many great Europeans.

566 Agricultural improvement, or the increase in produc-
423 tivity and in the welfare of the population dependent on
178 agriculture, is a complex process. In Eastern Europe, it involved in particular the release of the peasants from feudal